Reducing Costs, Whilst Maintaining Quality, Value, and Integrity

University of Sussex

Dr Ian Carter

Director of Research and Enterprise

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Question

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"At a time of pressure, should one increase the myriad requirements, or concentrate on the essentials?"

Current Pressures

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- To perform
- To reduce costs
- To comply
- To grow
- To reduce
- To concentrate
- To collaborate
- To translate
- To demonstrate

Growth and Constriction

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- Increase in the student population

  Participation rate moved from <10% to >40%

→Resultant increase in academic staff population

→Leads to more research proposals

→Which means reduced success rates

→Research Councils introduce Demand Management

UK Research Income (Source: HEIDI, HESA data)

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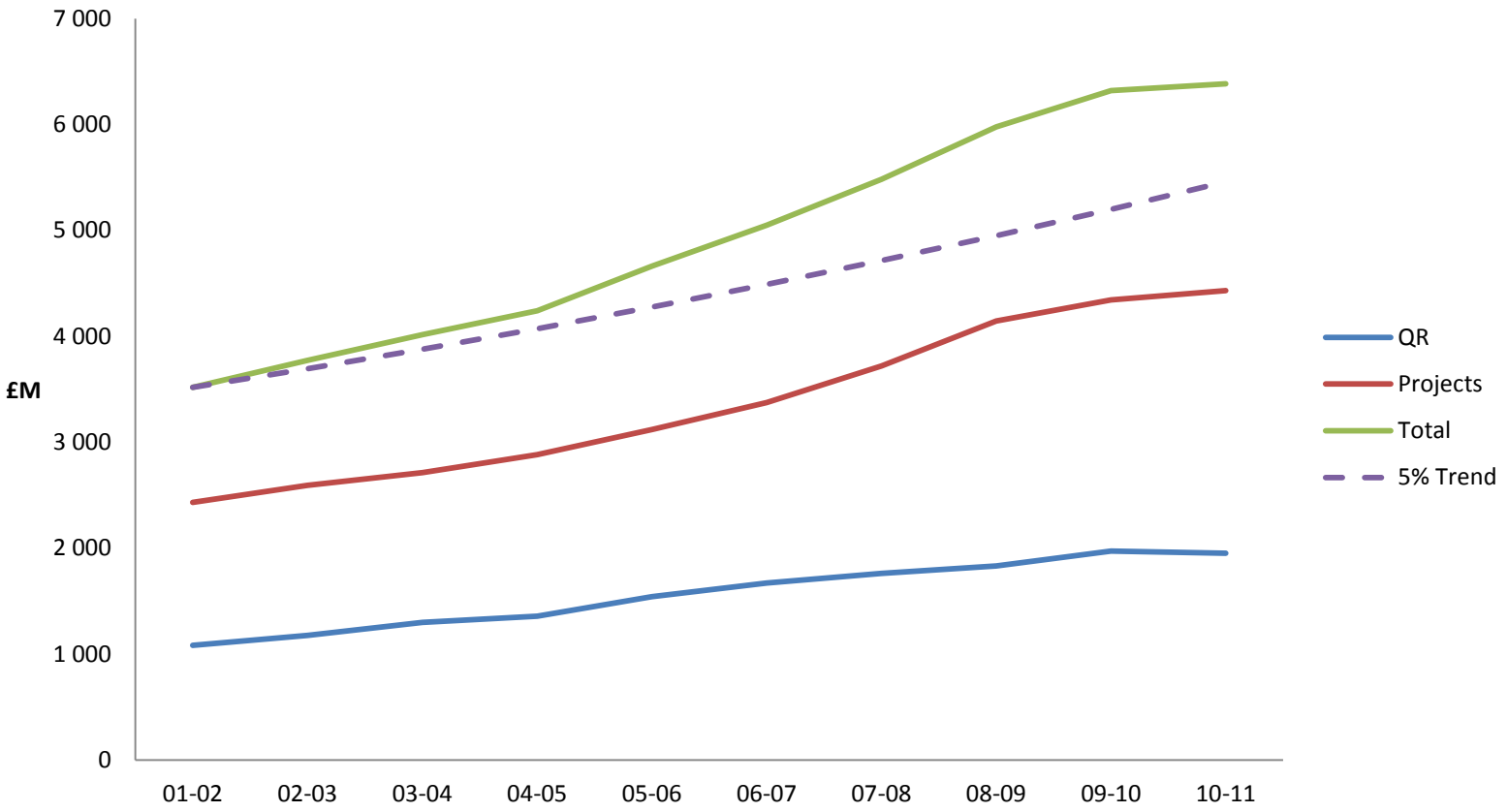

QR in Top 25 in England

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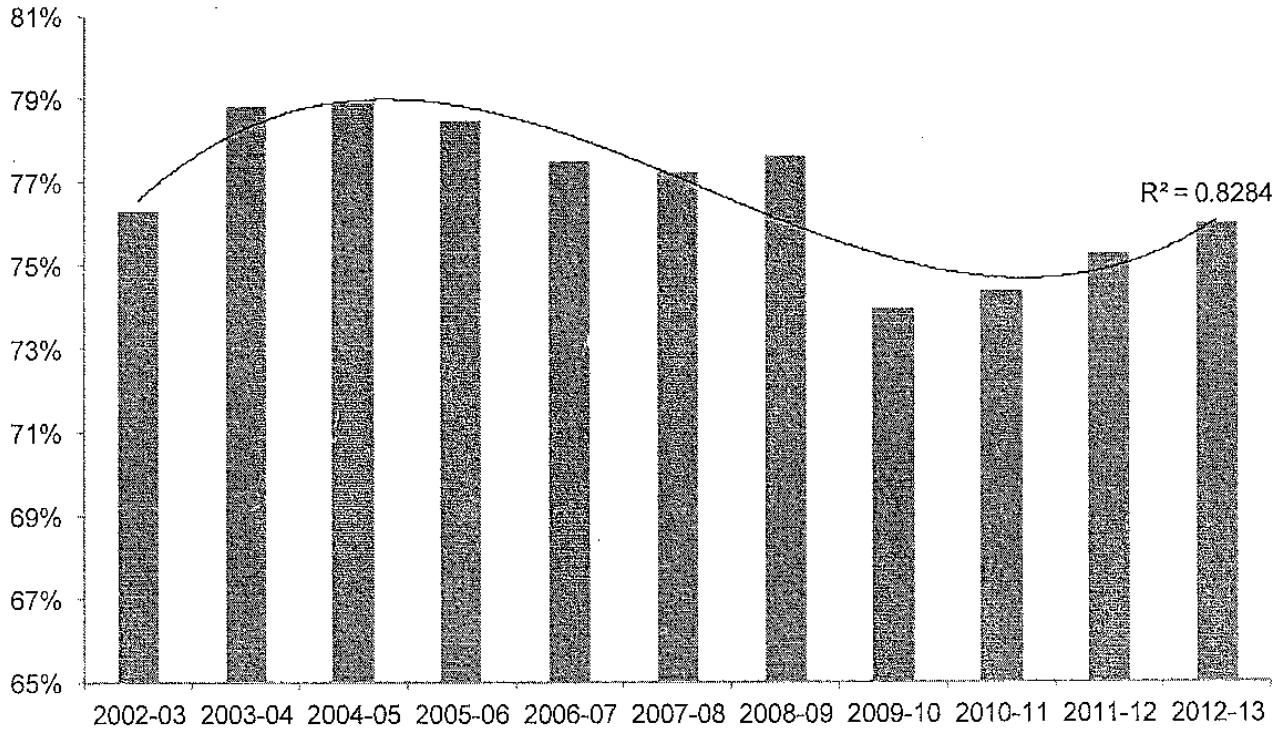

- UUK A-2012-04

HEFCE Capital Funding (real terms, 11-12 = 100)

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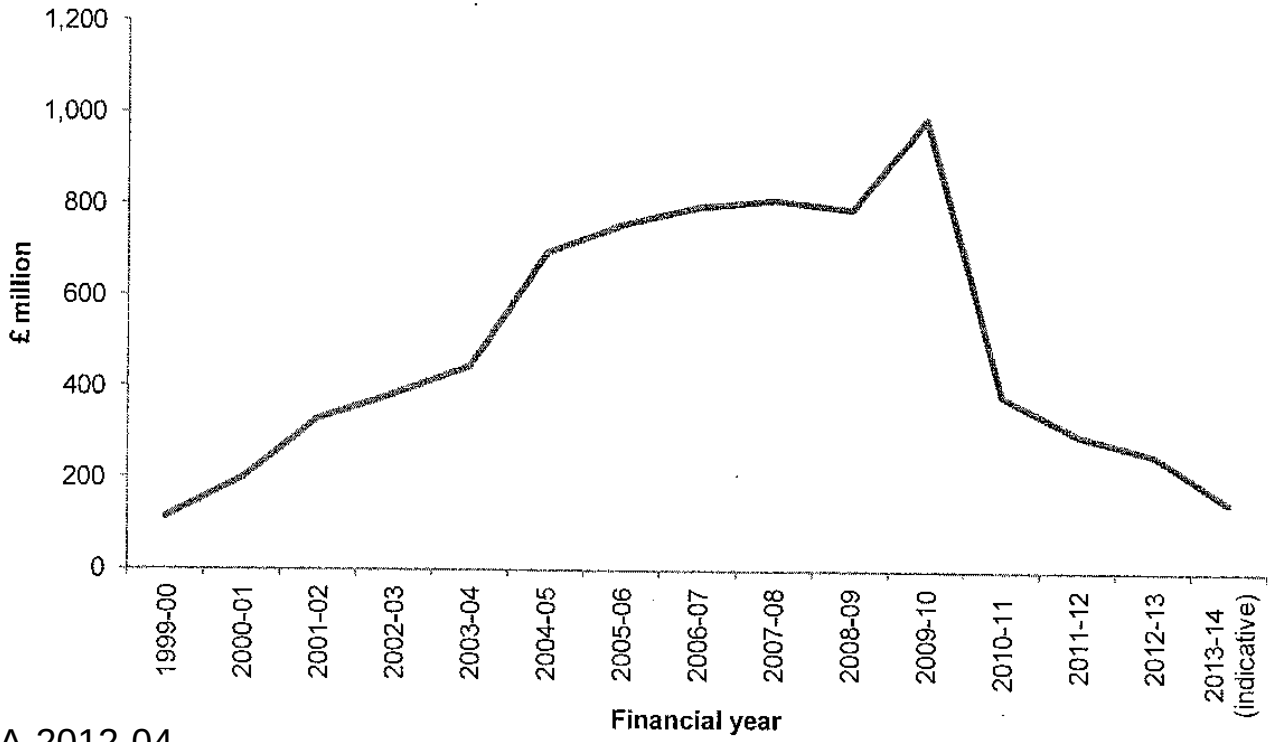

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Demand Management

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- Desire by Research Councils to reduce the number of applications
  - Less time spent in their development
  - Less resource required to review and process them
  - Improved success rates
- Institutions try to address quality, rather than volume
- Differing approaches by the Research Councils
- Does this really take account of the increased size of the sector?

Questions of Quality and Integrity

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- Are quality and integrity mutually reinforcing?
- Cannot “inspect-in” quality
- Can one “comply-in” integrity?
- New UK Concordat to Support Research Integrity

Principles of the New UK Concordat to Support Research Integrity

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- Maintaining the highest standard of research integrity
- Ensuring that research is conducted according to appropriate ethical, legal, and professional frameworks, obligations and standards
- Supporting a research environment that is underpinned by a culture of integrity, based on good governance, best practice and support for the development of researchers
- Using transparent, robust and fair processes to deal with allegations of research misconduct should they arise
- Working together to strengthen the integrity of research and reviewing progress regularly and openly

Competing Policy Priorities

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- Researcher skills and career development
- Public engagement
- Translation and Impact
- Open Access to published research results and to research data
- Research Integrity
- Economic and academic sustainability
- Cost reduction

- These are mostly overhead costs
- What's the priority order?
- Are strategies and policies aligned?

What to Do about Costs?

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- Operate a value hierarchy:
  - Must have
  - Ought to have
  - Like to have
- Focus resources and efforts
- Be prepared to say No
- Speed up decision-making processes
- Reduce process steps
- Enhance communication
- Reconsider what good performance looks like?

Questions and Discussion

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